

COINS

Introduction to the Attached Survey
on Use of COINS in CIA

CIA has been requested to consider participation in a major upgrading of COINS that would include new hardware at CIA and some CIA staffing of the COINS Project Office at NSA. In this connection, information is needed about how CIA's requirements for use of COINS are likely to change over the next few years. This survey is intended to obtain some of the needed information.

The questions that follow are being asked of all the Agency and IC components that deal with the kinds of subjects contained in COINS files. To help put the questions in perspective, they are preceded by a few paragraphs that give background on the current status and prospects of COINS.

There are two sets of questions. The first set, starting on page 4, is directed to users and potential users of COINS, whether analysts or managers. The questions are intended to find out who uses COINS in the Agency, for what purposes, and with what success. The questions are equally directed at those people who by virtue of their work assignment might be expected to have an interest in the kinds of information in the COINS data base, and yet make little or no use of COINS. In their case, the objective is to get a more precise understanding of why.

The second set of questions, beginning on page 7, is intended to elicit information about plans for data bases and research relevant to future use of COINS by Agency components. It is requested that Agency officers in a position to know of the requirements for such plans answer the questions in Section II.

Completed question sheets should be returned to:

COINS, CIA
Room 3F45
Headquarters

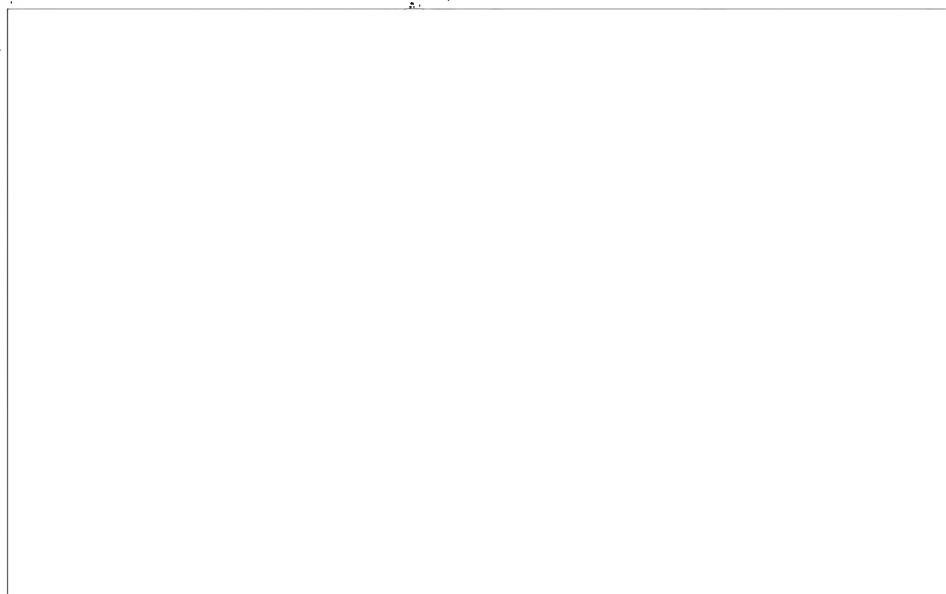
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Some Background on COINS

The COINS network provides access to some 43 files developed by USIB member agencies. The short and long titles of these files, their agency sponsors, and their classifications are listed on page 9. At CIA, these files are accessed through two Model 35 teletype terminals located at Headquarters, six Model 37 terminals at the CIA school, and several terminals (varying models) at NPIC.

It may soon be easier to access COINS data, and over the next few years more files will be included in the COINS data base. A current COINS proposal is to replace present COINS terminals with new Model 40 teletype terminals that are 30 times as fast, can query a file interactively and with visual display, and can also receive bulk transfer of data from remote terminals onto tape cassettes. Installation of the new terminals could begin about October of this year.

NSA is expected to be a principal supplier of new files for the COINS data base as that agency continues to implement the "paperless" reporting concept. Over the next two to three years we can expect:



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It is less clear what particular file contributions there might be from agencies other than NSA. Current COINS planning envisions the establishment of host computers at State, Navy (OSIS), and FTD (CIRCOL) by FY 1980. It can be expected that some of the data base files maintained by these organizations would then be put into COINS.

The number of DoD organizations with access to the COINS data base will continue to grow over the next few years. EUCOM Headquarters became a terminal subscriber in February. SAC and Fleet Intelligence Center EUR/LANT (FICEURLANT) joined COINS in March. In the Pacific area, there are now some seven military commands with terminals that access the COINS system, and this number is scheduled to increase as two terminals in Japan and possibly one in the Philippines and one in Taiwan are brought into the system. Over the next year or two, COINS terminals will also be established at FTD, FSTC, STIC, and CINCLANT.

How will COINS relate to SAFE? Planning has not proceeded far enough to be certain about this. COINS may be one of the external file systems that can be accessed by individual analysts via the SAFE system.

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CIA COINS Survey

I. Questions for Intelligence Officers Working on Subjects Related to Files in the COINS Data Base (see pages 9 and 10 for list of files)

A. What has been your general area of research interest over the past year?

B. About how many times have you (or a CRS analyst at your request) interrogated COINS files during the past year?

C. If no use, or very infrequent use, check reason(s) which apply:

1. I have no need for regular or frequent interrogation of the kinds of files that are in COINS.

2. The information in COINS is of marginal importance to my research and reporting responsibility.

3. I have better ways of getting at the data currently in COINS.

4. The data in COINS files relevant to my research and reporting responsibility are incomplete in an important respect. Please specify:

5. Until recently, I have not been familiar with what is available through COINS and how to get it.

6. I have not used COINS very much because it is too difficult to get a complete response in reasonable time.

7. I have used COINS little (or not at all) because (please specify any other reason not covered above):

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D. If you (or a CRS intermediary) interrogated COINS files during the past year:

Indicate your purpose(s) with a check.

Indicate short names of files interrogated. (Please repeat names as appropriate.)

1. Support for current intelligence reporting
2. Support for research paper
3. To keep abreast of developments in a particular substantive area
4. Requirements definition or evaluation
5. Management tool
6. File building
7. Other Please specify:

E. If a file was inadequate in some respect, list file and, very briefly, list reason.

Short Name of File(s)

Problem

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

F. Would the availability of the faster and more versatile Model 40 COINS terminals result in your more frequent use of the COINS data base? _____

G. At the present time, to interrogate DIA-sponsored files in the COINS data base, one must use the DIAOLS machine language; to get at NPIC-sponsored files in COINS one must use the PIRL language; to interrogate files sponsored by NSA (and CIA), one must use the TILE language; and, theoretically, as additional agency data bases having their own machine languages become part of COINS, it will be necessary to know a different language to query each. To simplify this requirement, the COINS management is developing a single "uniform data language" that will permit access to all current and prospective COINS data bases. It will still be necessary to know the structure and content of the target file, but one machine language will provide access to many data bases.

1. Is multiple-language access to the COINS system a problem for you now? _____
2. Do you expect that it will become a problem in the future? _____
3. Do you expect that you would use COINS more if a "uniform data language" were available? _____

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CIA COINS Survey

II. Questions About Plans for Research and Data Bases That Might Involve Access to COINS

A. Potential Value of COINS to CIA as a Distributive Mechanism

Are you planning or do you foresee that your Office/Service will be creating files that you would want to make available to non-CIA users (e.g., DIA, State, or NPIC) through COINS?

If yes, please explain briefly.

B. Potential Use of COINS as a Repository for Joint Data Bases

Are you planning or do you foresee the creation of files, done jointly with other agencies, that would normally be accessed by CIA analysts through COINS?

If yes, please explain briefly.

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C. Likely Use of COINS to Support Particular Agency Research Efforts

Are you planning ~~to~~ do you foresee that your Office/Service will undertake research projects that will require increased use of the COINS data base?

If yes, please explain briefly.

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